

Adapting Law Enforcement TTPs for SASO

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Adapting Law Enforcement TTPs for SASO

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In May 2003, coalition forces operating in Iraq completed decisive actions of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and transitioned to stability and support operations (SASO). During this phase, anti-Iraqi forces, a conglomerate of different interest groups, have attacked coalition and Iraqi security forces and created instability within the population centers of Iraq. In this environment, the coalition faces the daunting task of maintaining order in Iraq and assisting the Iraqis in establishing a government led by Iraqi citizens. To be successful during SASO, the U.S. military must incorporate law enforcement techniques, tactics, and procedures into combat training.

Background

The anti-Iraqi forces are composed of different subgroups: Islamic extremists, former Baath party elites, smugglers, and local gangs and thugs. These subgroups may have different agendas, but they all share one common goal - expulsion of foreign military forces and western ideology from Iraq. As a conventional fighting force, the anti-Iraqi forces would be no match for the firepower, technology and fighting spirit of the U.S. military. However, the anti-Iraqi forces are far from conventional.

These forces operate as guerillas and are dependent on the local populace for their survival: for cover and refuge and for

assistance in carrying out attacks against coalition and Iraqi security forces. Without this support, anti-Iraqi forces' operations would be severely hampered. Consequently, tactical units conducting SASO in Iraq need to focus on severing the ties between the anti-Iraqi forces and the local population.

SASO

Pacification is the key to conducting successful stability operations. The Encarta Dictionary defines pacification as "the use of military force or other measures to eradicate rebellion and restore an area to peace and government control."¹ Until Iraqi security forces are capable of maintaining peace and establishing government control of their country, coalition forces will fill this role by conducting SASO.

However, this role presents a unique challenge to the U.S. military, which is organized and trained for engaging in combat to destroy conventional enemy forces. Instead, the missions currently conducted by coalition forces in Iraq are mostly security missions with very few offensive operations (attacks, raids or clearing actions). In essence, the U.S. military is conducting police-type operations. In the U.S., police departments are tasked "to prevent crime, investigate crime and

¹ Encarta Dictionary Tools © 1993-2003 Microsoft Corporation, s.v. "Pacification."

apprehend offenders, control traffic, maintain order, and deal with emergencies and disasters."²

Training: Law Enforcement TTPs

"To protect and serve" is a popular motto for many police departments throughout the U.S. Tactical units operating in Iraq must adopt this "protect and serve" motto in their areas of operation. In many towns and villages, anti-Iraqi forces terrorize and intimidate the local citizens who show support for the new Iraqi government. Security is a basic human need. Local Iraqi leaders want security and order in their neighborhoods so people can resume their daily lives.³ Consequently, U.S. and coalition forces must be trained to fulfill this role.

The strategy for providing security may vary depending on the specific town, village, or neighborhood. However, a tactic used by police departments is the assignment of designated communities to the same police officers,⁴ so officers patrolling their specific "beat" become familiar with the neighborhood. When military units apply this concept to a neighborhood or small village in Iraq, the military patrol becomes intimately familiar with their "beat" or assigned neighborhood or village. This intimate knowledge of the operating environment allows

² Encarta © 1993-2003 Microsoft Corporation, s.v. "Police Operations."

³ McDaniel, Lance A., "Transitioning From Conventional Combat," *Marine Corps Gazette*, November 2005, 53.

⁴ Encarta, s.v. "Police Operations."

military units to recognize subtle changes in the environment and, more importantly, to become familiar with the local population. Furthermore, providing security or supporting the local Iraqi police in maintaining security in a neighborhood isolates the anti-Iraqi forces from the local population.

In addition, a substantial amount of U.S. police department resources are devoted to criminal investigation. "In large departments, detectives are organized into specialized units, such as homicide, robbery, and narcotics."⁵ U.S. military units operating in Iraq are not organized to conduct criminal investigations, but military units can incorporate specific police procedures to ensure that criminals are convicted for their crimes. For example, U.S. police officers devote a substantial amount of time to "book" a suspected criminal properly (filling out the appropriate paper work and reports to process the suspected criminal). Similarly in Iraq, when a military patrol apprehends a suspected criminal, the patrol leader must understand the importance of "booking" the suspected criminal, and he must thoroughly document the evidence and statements related to the apprehension of the suspected criminal. When this process is done haphazardly, the detainee may be released, eroding police credibility in the eyes of the citizens in the community.

⁵ Encarta, s.v. "Police Operations."

In fact, Jeremiah Pray, a U.S. Army Captain currently serving in OIF II, emphasizes the importance of providing detailed documents associated with detainee operations.

The soldiers who are completing the "sworn statements" need to be very specific in who, what, where, when, and why they captured an individual. It helps if, before they start writing, they agree on the name of the target with the same spelling, what evidence came from the target house, the grid location, at exactly what time the raid was conducted, and what the target is suspected of doing. This will prevent inconsistencies in the statements. Detainees are pushed as soon as possible (typically within four hours from capture) to the detention facility. This allows the capturing unit to continue with their tactical missions.⁶

Once the detainee has been transferred to a higher headquarter's detention facility, the eye witnesses (capturing unit) are no longer able to influence the decision to hold or release the detainee. Judge advocates working with the detention facilities rely solely on the evidence and the sworn statements within the detainee package to make a recommendation to hold or release the detainee.

In addition, U.S. military must alter the offensive mindset which was so critical during Phase II of OIF. U.S. military units are trained to overcome an attack or an ambush by gaining fire superiority and maneuvering to counterattack the enemy. The offensive mindset is ingrained in all military action and missions, i.e. patrolling, establishing a defense, and security

⁶Jeremiah Pray, "Kinetic Targeting in Iraq at the Battalion Task Force Level: From Target to Detainee," *Infantry Magazine*, July/August 2005, 33.

operations. Dr. William Lind, in his draft FMFM 1-A, Fourth Generation Warfare, states that the military must "manage most confrontations by de-escalating, not by escalating."⁷ Police officers understand the importance of allowing their actions from becoming a precipitating cause of violence.⁸ When confronted with a potential threat or civil disturbance, police officers make every attempt to de-escalate the situation and settle the situation peacefully.

In the U.S., databases are created with detailed information by town, city, county, and state. Local and federal police departments use these databases for law enforcement and criminal investigations. In Iraq, neither an updated databases nor census of Iraqi citizens exists. "A unit leader cannot effectively provide security if he does not understand who[m] he is securing."⁹

While the tactical units would benefit tremendously from a census of their areas of operation, they have not yet been tasked to do so. However, a unit can start by compiling information from old phone books or municipal registers to establish a baseline for a later census. Creating the census should be a coalition effort led by Iraqi civic leaders and

⁷ Lind, William S., "FMFM 1-A: Fourth Generation Warfare (Draft)," 27.

⁸ Encarta, s.v. "Police Operations."

⁹ Strickland, Adam T., "MCDP 1, Warfighting, Revisited," *Marine Corps Gazette*, August 2005, 55.

local Iraqi security forces. In addition to updating the census, Iraqi citizens should be issued an identification card similar to a U.S. state driver's license. Most importantly, having a census and establishing identification cards for Iraqi citizens would aid security forces in their stability operations in Iraq.

Conclusion

The current mission in Iraq is primarily focused on maintaining order and providing security. This mission is analogous to law enforcement responsibilities of U.S. local and federal law enforcement entities. Consequently, the U.S. military should study and apply the techniques, tactics, and procedures used by U.S. police departments for current and future missions.

Word Count: 1,276

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